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AUTODROMO NAZIONALE MONZA

## Four(ty six) to the floor...

Valentino Rossi blew away the remnants of a dour racing campaign and a disappointingly damp reunion with Yamaha at Valencia recently with another successful blast in a rally car at Monza. The historic circuit near Milan was another walk for the Italian in front of the usual clamouring fanbase as he drove his WRC-spec Ford Fiesta to a third straight win at what was the 90th anniversary of the event

Photo by Monster Energy/Bettiol



**MotoGP**









## Calendar countdown...

The anxious moments that Dakar rally competitors have been reluctant to face all year are now creeping up on the 459 entrants as the final days and checks before the trip to South America take place for the 35th edition. KTM, with 2012 winner Cyril Despres and team-mate Marc Coma, will again be the chief targets but watch out for Helder Rodrigues on the new Honda as well. Only 8000km to go starting Jan 5th in Lima.

Photo by Jonty Edmunds















## New Boy...

There will be three significant rookies in the 2013 FIM MX1 Motocross World Championship, all with factory machinery and Monster Energy Yamaha's Joel Roelants is one of the new protagonists to make the step-up from MX2. The strong Belgian has been recovering from a dislocated hip after a horror crash in practice for the British GP in August but will soon be ready for action on the distinctive black YZ450FM

Photo by Yamaha Motor Europe/Bavo Swiggers







## Refocused...

Before you start to flip in frustration at the sight of yet another tasty sports bike that is hard to justify the financial outlay these days, it is worth noting that with the ZX-6R Kawasaki are taking a major shot at reviving a dipping segment. Roland Brown takes the latest Ninja for a spin and writes why this green machine is more than it seems...

Photo by Campbell/Wing



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# 2013 SHOW- OFFS

By Adam Wheeler, Photos by Roberto Bosi, M. Campelli, Ducati, MV Agusta, Triumph

**E**ICMA is a beast of a show. Six halls, six days, more than 1000 exhibitors and over half a million visitors. It can be tough to get around in one 'lap'. While it is encouraging to see either the rude health or valiant optimism of many companies inside or connected to the motorcycle industry with their bold and bright stands in Milan, the 70th motorcycle fair in the fashion capital was still a big stage for the manufacturers to put on a brave face. Companies split their efforts between the recent Intermot at Cologne (only six weeks previously) and the Italian gathering and while – expectedly – companies like BMW, Yamaha, Kawasaki and Honda unveiled their wares in Germany,

brands like Ducati, MV Agusta, Piaggio and even KTM saved some special sights for the Italian public. With the racing season firmly finished the athletes were out in force (Biaggi, Cairoli, Coma, Despres, Cortese, Herlings to name a few) and the competition had not quite finished as the vast 130,000m<sup>2</sup> MotoLive area for Supercross and Supermoto provide distraction from the hall corridors and the espressos. Across the spread here are some of the new models that caught our eye and will tempt wallets until the next major display next autumn in Paris. Roland Brown also rides Kawasaki's new ZX-6R and we'll have the Moto Guzzi California rolling through these pages very soon.



# D

## FEATURE

# KTM



We showed off the Super Duke 1290R prototype in the last issue and the only disappointing thing about this stunner of a bike is the fact it was teasingly fired for all of a second at EICMA.

The official video (click on the link) is one of those rare productions that perfectly encapsulate what a motorcycle concept is all about. We can only wonder how KTM will chip away and modify it ready for the factory lines later in 2013.

Also on the stand were the Red Bull Rookies customer bike – a production machine derived directly from the model that won the very first Moto3 title this year and more Super Dukes in the form of the 200 and the 390. The new Adventures (that were presented at Intermot) were receiving a lot of attention but to us the 390 model with its sub-five thousand euro price and Super Duke ‘calling card’ of excellent power-weight ratio was a curious creation and we’ll have a bit more info on this one coming up in future issues.









# D

## FEATURE







## TRIUMPH

The Brits had some more Union Jacks draped over shiny metal in Italy after earlier using Intermot to reveal the latest generation of Street Triples. This time the display girls uncovered the new Daytona 675 (and R), which the company claim is a bike three years in the making.

Before launching, Triumph threw some impressive statistics at the assembled press group. The manufacturer now has five production facilities (including Brazil and soon to be in India) and since 2008 have doubled their engineering resources and blossomed their output from thirteen to twenty-three motorcycles. 85% of their bikes are exported from the UK to fifty-two markets; thirty of which have been reached since 2010.

“We have been rather busy in the last two years,” underlined Sales and Marketing Director Paul Stroud “and we are not slowing down with our investment.” With good reason too. Triumph have seen a 19.6% growth since 2007 and in trying conditions. They have shifted 47,447 bikes in 2012 so far and the new 675 and 675R could help inflate 2013 figures with the bike’s first upgrade in three years.

The major differences? Two more horsepower with a different engine (increased piston diameter, more pressure for positive effects on torque) ABS, revised styling, new Kayaba suspension and a swing arm particular to the model. Triumph were keen to stress that the 675 is a fresh bike from the wheels up. Product manager Simon Warburton commented that perhaps only the indicators are the same components. The riding position has also been altered to be “less stressful”.







## **DUCATI**

If EICMA is a movie then Ducati are the A-listers; their stand a collection of shimmering treats that is probably only rivalled by MV Agusta in the saliva-inducing and cult-appeal stakes.

Our pick from the red corner of Milan was the new Hyperstrada and the R version of the breath-taking Panigale. The Hyperstrada is the standout model from the latest generation of Hypermotards as the factory attempt to blend their style and sporty emphasis onto something that is practical. Arguably more alluring that the majority of their sport-touring peers it will be interesting to see how the bike is

received. It houses a new 4-valve Testastretta engine with three maps for progressive torque, ABS, 30k service intervals, enlarged 16 litre fuel tank and touring riding position and typical eye-catching Ducati details such as the sharp styling and single sided swingarm.

The 1199 Panigale R benefits from a series of touches to preserve and heighten that racing edge. More titanium (connecting rods), carbon fibre and a pedigree derived direct from the WSB racetrack means a weight saving of ten kilos and a power boost of 25hp. Handle with care!









PLAY



# MV AGUSTA

It seems naked is the way to go and MV Agusta have jumped on the bandwagon in admirable form by showing off the 2013 Brutale 800 on home turf as well as the Rivale. The latter model gathered Italian magazine Motociclismo's award for 'Best bike of the show' and the small company's strong venture into the hypermotard segment comes with a compact and punchy three cylinder 125hp engine and weight just shy of 170kg.

The Rivale is fully loaded with electronics and definitely looks the part; that three exhaust collective adding a mean edge. It will be on sale in the summer for a few notes under the 11,000 euro mark. The Brutale has a softer inclination when it comes to the Supermoto flavour given to the Rivale but the same engine is a significant upgrade on the 675 and means that it grabs its own torquey corner of the Brutale family.





**PLAY**

Honda Pro Images

# NO RAIN ESCAPE FOR HONDA AT SEPANG

**T**he 2012 season may be over but the wet weather that dogged it continues to hinder post-season testing, with Honda pair Marc Márquez and Alvaro Bautista welcomed to Sepang by a tropical storm on Monday.

The test was initially planned only for Márquez but after a rain-affected session at Valencia following the final round of the season Bautista was also invited to continue working on suspension updates from Showa. Overnight rain had left the track useless until almost mid-day and the test was effectively over by 2pm thanks to another downpour.

“At the moment the weather is definitely not our friend!” reflected Márquez. “This morning the circuit was wet and we waited until 11:00 to

go out on track. After only four exits it began to rain again and the day was over for us. The grip level was very low and at the beginning it was quite difficult to find any grip at all. However, I am happy because I have been able to improve my lap time each time I went out, even though I remained on the same tyres. Let’s hope that the weather will be kinder tomorrow and it won’t rain!”

The Spanish pair, who have been joined by regular Honda test riders Kousuke Akiyoshi and Takumi Takahashi, finish the test on Wednesday, when Ducati begin a three-day session at Jerez with Andrea Dovizioso, Nicky Hayden and Andrea Iannone in the saddle as Ben Spies continues to recover from his shoulder injury.



# ROSSI RALLIES AT MONZA

The 30,000 or so fans that piled into Monza on Sunday sure got the spectacle they came for. The 90th edition of the Monza Rally Show saw Valentino Rossi claim his third title at the fabled Milanese circuit and even scored a double as he walked away with not only the Stage Rally win but also took the top step of the Master Show.

“We come to win” were The Doctor’s first words to the press ahead of the weekend. He delivered, and in some style: with multiple Le Mans winner Dindo Capello breathing down his neck, Valentino had huge competition all weekend and in fact secured a margin of victory in the Stage Rally by a tight 2.8 seconds, after nine outings, around the awesome Autodrome di Monza. The pair traded stage wins on Sunday morning and it was ultimately a further 54.4 seconds back to Piero Longhi in third.

Run on the start-finish straight and in honor of the late Marco Simoncelli: the head-to-head format saw Valentino set fastest times in his heats. Picking his way to the final, he came up against fellow MotoGP star Andrea Dovizioso, who couldn’t find quite enough to stay with him. The final run saw him square up against Capello one more time but over the three-lap run he blazed to the win by over 8.5 seconds.

Team VR46 Racing’s outfit depart Monza with a medal haul thanks to Valentino’s exploits but plenty to celebrate in the form of Robby Brivio and Uccio Salucci’s results as they stormed home to ninth and thirteenth respectively in the Stage Rally format. Meanwhile, Dovizioso will no doubt fancy another crack at four-wheel racing thanks to a solid performance throughout, scoring fifth place in the Stage Rally as well as his Master podium.





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**CAIROLI UND  
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# DÉJÀ-VU

Tony Cairoli krönt sich 2012 vorzeitig und zum dritten Mal in Folge mit der KTM 350 SX-F zum MX1 Weltmeister. Nach Marvin Musquin 2010 und Ken Roczen 2011, sorgt Jeffrey Herlings mit der KTM 250 SX-F dafür, dass das Red Bull KTM Werksteam seit nunmehr drei Jahren in beiden Klassen ungeschlagen ist – WELTKLASSE!

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## MARQUED MEN...

By Matthew Roberts

As the dust settles on the 2012 MotoGP World Championship and attention turns to a 2013 season without the presence of Casey Stoner fans are keeping their fingers crossed that the new campaign does not turn into the two-horse all-Spanish race that it promises to be. Unfortunately the incredibly high standard set by Stoner, Jorge Lorenzo and Dani Pedrosa over the past five or six years, not to mention their time together in the smaller classes, has driven them on to reach levels out of reach of the rest of the present field.

Of course, Valentino Rossi played his part in this process too during the noughties. However, whilst Rossi has floundered mid-pack for the past two seasons on the Ducati the competition in front of him has moved on again and the challenge to rejoin the quest for new limits in a sport that has already seen him hit the summit once, is momentous. The question now is not whether Rossi has still got what he had, but whether he can be even better.

He will need to be.

It is a long-established process of evolution in sport whereby worthy newcomers to any discipline eventually match and then surpass the technical abilities or athletic achievements of the men and women they once idolised and looked to emulate. This is what has happened with the emergence of Stoner, Pedrosa and Lorenzo and before long it will be they who are looking over their shoulders as the super-talented Marc Marquez, who has the potential to be on the podium from race one in 2013, gets their measure.

Marquez is the most exciting thing to happen to MotoGP since Randy de Puniet agreed to marry Lauren Vickers and have her hold his broly at every race. The latest talent from the

Spanish production line arrives in the premier-class on the back of four sensational seasons in the smaller classes, during which time he has claimed two world titles but perhaps more importantly shown flashes of the pure genius

Marquez is reckless, there is no doubt, and a series of mistakes and misjudgements this season alone were belatedly punished at Valencia when he was sent to the back of the grid for unnecessarily barging Simone Corsi during free practice.

However, even with the Moto2 title already in the bag and an important MotoGP test to look forward to 48 hours later Marquez saw this just as another opportunity to showcase his ridiculous superiority and went on to complete an unprecedented comeback in the recorded history of Grand Prix racing. That triumph only narrowly eclipsed his effort in Motegi a month earlier, when he also came through to take the win after hitting neutral at the start. Phillip Island in 2011 and Estoril in 2010; there are plenty of examples.

Questions may rightly be asked about the quality of the current Moto2 field and Marquez will have to curb his aggression as he adapts to the big class, in much the same way Rossi, Lorenzo and Stoner had to do on their way to the top. But the sheer sangfroid and skill of this merciless young charger cannot be ignored and you can bet that both Pedrosa and Lorenzo are more than wary of the threat. How the experienced pair react not only to this fresh challenge but more importantly to the pressure they are sure to exert on each other from the opening round of 2013 could ensure that the new season is not the closed book people are predicting – especially with Rossi, Crutchlow, Stefan Bradl and Alvaro Bautista all sure to be on hand to pick up the pieces.







# BULLET FOR MY SPRINGTIME

By Roland Brown, photos by Adam Campbell & Kevin Wing









# D

## TEST

**F**unny how motorcycle fashions and opinions change. A decade or so ago, the middleweight super-sports class was thriving. Bikes like Kawasaki's ZX-6R of 2003 were regarded as the perfect compromise: fast enough to be exciting, more controllable and better value than bigger bikes.

Then the market turned against these demanding racetrack refugees with their rev-happy engines, cramped riding positions and rising price tags that suddenly didn't seem such good value after all. Or perhaps the typical motorcyclist just got too old to appreciate machines designed to shave circuit lap times, and opted for the softer charms of a naked or adventure bike instead.

As sales plummeted the Japanese firms pretty much gave up developing sporty middleweights. But now Kawasaki are fighting back with a new ZX-6R and a subtly different approach. Rather than chasing more extreme performance, they've attempted to create a more rider-friendly streetbike. The changes from last year's model are aimed at increasing rideability and comfort, not speed.









TEST





This ZX-6R also has a secret weapon, and it's an old favourite: capacity is increased from 599 to 636cc, echoing that fondly remembered model from 2003. In conjunction with other tweaks including a new exhaust system, this boosts torque throughout the rev range, as well as increasing peak power by 3bhp to 135bhp.

Styling is updated to resemble that of the fearsome ZX-10R flagship, but this smaller bike's main chassis change is a longer and more softly sprung rear shock. Kawasaki's designers also added some electronic trickery, borrowed from other models in the range. The ZX-6R becomes the first Japanese middleweight with a traction control system, and also gives a choice between two power modes.

On the evidence of the launch on road and racetrack in northern California, Kawasaki are going in the right direction. The ZX-6R was fantastic fun on some twisty, near-deserted tarmac north of Sacramento. It was hard to be sure that the extra midrange grunt made a significant difference. But the Kawa certainly pulled cleanly from low revs, and by 8000rpm was tearing forward at a seriously rapid rate.

There was plenty of top-end wallop, too, along with a sweet-shifting six-speed gearbox to help make the most of it. I wasn't convinced of the need for the reduced power mode on a middleweight with such a sweet, easily controlled throttle response. But the traction control, adjustable via the same switch on the left clip-on, could come in useful on slippery roads.

This bike's biggest gain for everyday riding is its chassis. The new rear shock did an excellent job of smoothing out bumps while also keeping control. Showa's latest 'separate function' big piston forks, which offer spring preload adjustment on the left leg and damping on the right, also gave a plush ride that should be easy on ageing riders' tender wrists.







TEST

***“The middleweight super-sports class might have been down, but the ZX-6R proves that it’s up on its feet and fighting back....”***







The Kawasaki makes a superb track day weapon too, as it showed at a spectacular roller-coaster of a circuit called Thunderhill Park. With its suspension firmed up and its rear end raised slightly (using a shim in the shock mount), the ZX-6R changed direction with breathtaking agility. Yet it was also very stable and confidence-inspiring, despite no longer being fitted with a steering damper.

It was faaaast, too, screaming to over 140mph on the pit straight, roughly 20mph short of its top speed, and charging out of bends with its rev-counter needle jabbing towards the 16,000rpm redline through the gears. It was difficult to tell to what extent the traction control was working, but its high-tech safety net was welcome all the same.

Braking from the uprated, radial monobloc Nissin front brake was arm-pumpingly powerful. We didn't get to try the ABS equipped model, which is due next spring. Unfortunately it's so expensive (an extra £1000 in the UK, at £9999 to the standard model's £8999) that few buyers are likely to pay the extra. But the standard ZX-6R is good fare; competitive with rival middleweights and cheaper than bigger superbikes both to buy and to run.







PLAY

Many riders, especially older ones, will doubtless still consider it too racy and uncomfortable for everyday use. In many ways they'll be right. It's still a narrowly focused, speed hungry greyhound of a motorbike that prefers plenty of revs despite that extra engine capacity, and comes alive on the dark side of the national speed limit. But Kawasaki's changes have softened it a touch without detracting from its raw appeal.

Perhaps when those riders have tired of battling the wind on naked bikes, or accepted that they'll never commit to riding round the world after all, they'll rediscover the joys of a sleek, high-tech middleweight with thrilling performance, tack-sharp handling and a respectable level of comfort and all-round ability. The middleweight super-sports class might have been down, but the ZX-6R proves that it's up on its feet and fighting back.







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# 3

## REASONS WHY **SCOTT** **SPORTS** DEMANDS YOUR ATTENTION

By Adam Wheeler, photos by Scott Sports

**S**cott Sports enters its fifty-fifth year in 2013 and the recent EICMA motorcycle fair in Milan saw the American firm showing a strong hand with their apparel and safety products. The depth of the collection was such that it's easy to forget the company was born in the snow and is immediately recognisable for their label in outdoor pursuits as much as for moto.

The truth is that Scott have a pedigree in motocross goggles and boots going back over four decades and have been able to adapt their technology and knowledge from the mountain ranges to forge some pretty special items for motorcyclists forever looking to keep dry, cool/warm and protected while on the tarmac.

We checked out the stand in Italy and also spoke with Motorsports Brand Manager Andreas Geisinger (formerly with Leatt and BMW) on why Scott are becoming increasingly difficult to ignore, regardless of the rubber profile on your wheels...







## 1

## OFF-ROAD FULLY COVERED...



Scott first launched their motocross goggles in 1970 and with patented systems for personalised face-fit and air flow they can rightly feel confident about the strength of their product.

Their outreach into off-road motorcycling has spread prolifically in the last five years. To such a degree that riders and racers can now count on the Scott name from helmet to boot, and underneath as well with the new Commander chest protector offering a seamless fit with neck braces. "One of our priorities for 2013 was to continue to establish Scott in off-road where we are well known as 'Scott the goggle company' but we are becoming more head-to-toe with helmets, gloves, gear, protection – with the Commander – and boots," offers Geisinger. "That is quite a change for us because ten years ago it was only about the eyewear. We want more presence in the Enduro segment as well."

While defending a rider's eyesight is an element that Scott have covered, branching into other territory with a number of strong competitors – and being able to stand-out - was another task. "The main challenge for us was that we found a lot of the brands and designs are very comparable and they all seem to follow each other," says Geisinger. "In terms of design, three years ago the look was very 'explosive' whereas now it is about blocks and large areas of colour. To an extent you have to follow the direction as well – you cannot do something that is totally against the current grain – but you also need to find your own identity and this is the hard part."

"Every year the design for a new collection is such a fast-turning process and deciding a look for two years ahead is interesting and fun. The changes we made to our 250, 350 and 450 line-ups were appreciated and I think you will see the large colours and blocks applied to goggles as well. Personally I like it more, it is cleaner."

An off-road motorcyclist can be using anything up to ten/eleven different pieces of kit every time he or she throws a leg over a bike. There must have been a reason for Scott to head in the 'head-to-toe' direction but are riders really sticking to one brand for all this stuff?

"From our research we found that people tend to mix it up more in Enduro," Geisinger offers. "I don't think they care much about overall branding and I think you will see companies do not advertise emphatically in the sport. Enduro riders might use our goggles but then pick and choose. It is a side effect of motocross where riders tend to be more brand-orientated with links to the casual market and it has more of a lifestyle push. The USA is still the trendsetter and the Europeans follow the big boys in the U.S. to see what is going on with colours and style. If you make a good design then people might change the brand and buy something else but the style is paramount...looking cool is the goal."





Mud and dirt is a happy hunting ground for Scott, and that makes their foray into road motorcycling curious.

It is clear that thanks to the wealth of time and investment in their outdoor pursuit products (check out the website: [www.scott-sports.com](http://www.scott-sports.com)) the company has a sea of material and know-how to fashion garments that will hit every desirable criterion for the sport/adventure tourer. The link between the spheres within Scott is obvious and partly explains why their focus is on the big-bike fan rather than the superbiking knee scraper.

"We changed our approach through the last two years and we presented our first full collection this year at the EICMA show in Milan for sport-touring. No leathers, no racing gloves. We are not hitting the MotoGP guy but rather the adventure and sport touring riders. Those that are likely to wheel out a 1200RT or the new Triumph. From a design point of view we found that it is a segment that is very well appreciated and through our work we have veered away from the classic, traditional designs that these riders can find."

For the adventure-tourer we're talking about resistant and expensive items that can weather a variety of climates. One jacket has to play several roles and arguably there is more trust applied by the rider when it comes to purchasing these types of products. It means that Scott have to hit the mark right away with the likes of the Distinct 1, Dual Raid and All Terrain if they want to compete with, say, BMW.

"We had a big influence from our Outdoor, Wintersports and Running departments for the functionality and comfort. For example, we have the lightest Gore-Tex three layer jacket on the market."

## GETTING ON ROAD...



"In terms of design we think that a lot of what is out there is pretty similar; you can change the label but most jackets remain the same. We have diversified and so far that has been well received from the media and also, importantly, from the dealers. They see the products as something new and that's a good reason to take it. We had one testimonial that said a lot of people are envious about the jacket because it looks good, feels light and is actually comfortable to wear."

Aiming at this particular area of the motorcycle market cannot rely on the high visibility of motorsport. The ways and means of getting the message about the product out there must therefore be one of the trickier parts of the job.

"We all know the medium age of a rider in the touring category...probably 99% have grey hair already! We know the segment is maturing every year and young riders are drawn to more sportive styles," muses Geisinger.

"It is difficult, because it is a 'traditional' group we are targeting. If you go too wild or too crazy with the design then you already hit problems with the distributor who is afraid to sell or buy it. What we are aiming towards is what I tend to call the 'hedonistic modernist': the person who wants something new, who wants to 'live'. We've found from customer group feedback that there are a lot of riders who want to be motorcyclists, but also want to be a bit different and find a new style. Like those who don't want a GS but maybe go with an alternative."













## SNOW AND QUALITY...

Simply flick through the history section of Scott's website and the first images you'll find are based on the slopes. When Ed Scott invented the aluminium ski pole back in the 1950s it was probably very difficult for him to imagine his vision would one day lead to an international enterprise with bases in Switzerland and nine other non-U.S. locations including India. He probably wouldn't have thought that marauding snowmobile riders would also be a group identified to wear the logo of his company.

"For snowmobile we have seen a big change in trend away from the racing styles – that is almost motocross-like – to a direction that is freeride, a bit baggy and freestyle. There is a link there with the touring garments that have to be functional and not too fancy. Scott really comes into play here because we have premium Ski material that translates well into this field."

As Geisinger points out Scott holds a powerful ace through the translation of experience and ideas from their different activities to motorcyclists. It is obvious to assume that elements of their effective ski and snowmobile lines will be more than capable for a long ride on a tourer or through hillside passes in the depths of winter on an enduro bike. Naturally, the end product is more than a matter of simply restyling a ski jacket for a bike rider, and the vast push Scott are making for two wheel fans will not be a passing fad.

"I joined two years ago and the team was set-up with almost a free hand from the management," insights Geisinger. "We get good investment backing and the opportunity to do what we can."

"That gives you a lot of confidence and with the new team, new distribution representative and new marketing support we can really run with it. There is not a controlling group standing behind you after one year saying 'where are the sales?' and that gives you a bit of space to follow your convictions. So it is a long-term plan for the product and to be honest with the Scott name on the back it carries a 'promise' and makes things much easier. We have SAS-Tech for some of the best protection inside the garment, we have Gore-Tex three layer and that's the high quality we are bringing."

As mentioned before, adventure tourers might be looking to splash out once in half a decade on a jacket that will suit their tastes and purposes.

Scott insist their range of offerings for the motorcyclist are designed to work in application, as opposed to just being an easy ride on the wallet.

"It never makes sense to out-price somebody because that 'comes back on you' and you destroy the market. As a premium brand there is no need to out-price somebody and if you look at Scott - just the bicycles alone – then it is top range. It is where we position our on-road emphasis: Innovation, Technology and Design are the three buzzwords for us. We are talking about a premium segment and product for sure."



# MORE THAN JUST A GOGGLE: **SCOTT** AND THEIR **COMMANDER**

## **On the fuss over chest protection...**

AG: "We are excited about the Commander because of the system that allows it to be full integrated with a neck brace. In some countries like France, Denmark and Italy you need a certification for the brace and if you remove a component because you want it to fit with a chosen chest or back protector then you cannot compete. With the Commander – thanks to a floating piece on the back - we managed to accommodate the neck brace into the unit rather than on top. We found that you often saw some guys racing at the track and they are trying to push the brace down with their head because it is shifting upwards so this was one of the areas we wanted to address with the Commander. I think it is the way to go and we've learnt that riders allied to other brands are using our protector under their shirts because the system works.

## **On the development...**

AG: "I left Leatt two years ago and joined Scott and there were already working on it. I had been focussed on neck protection since 2003 and was at the point of that research group on neck protection with BMW and the likes of Heinz Kinigadner. So I had a lot of experience and we tried a lot of stuff. In the old days I made a chest protector with some removable parts but with time, expertise and the focus on the Commander we were able to come up with the floating back component, which was something I always wanted to realise and try. It just needed the extra investment and I'm really happy with the feedback so far."

## **On the link with Leatt and their neck brace that sees Scott selling a branded version of the South African company's award-winning product and dovetails nicely with the Commander...**

AG: "Scott wants to have the best product. I was involved in the Leatt brace from the beginning and knowing all the test results from the competitors that we did in the lab at Leatt and at BMW (where we had to convince the legal department that the brace kept its promise) the level of engineering was clear. The proof was seen only a few weeks ago when Leatt's patent in Europe was granted after being challenged by Alpinestars a couple of times. Knowing the results and the effectiveness of that specifically engineered product there was no doubt in going to Leatt and suggesting collaboration. They also needed a route for bicycle distribution as they have a model for bicycles as well. It was basically a perfect fit and we immediately had access to the best product. It would have been a couple of years to make anything near as good as the Leatt brace and a copy that would be now half illegal! We have similar arrangements with Gore-Tex. So why not?







# MXGP CHANGES AFOOT

The news is slightly old now and we've offered our two pennies worth on the possible structural change for the FIM Motocross World Championship in the Blog over the page but what are the ramifications of the recent alterations to the rulebook?

The look of Grand Prix both at the circuit and through websites, magazines and TV screens will alter with the stipulation on the green fencing to mark the exterior of the tracks now removed. Circuits can be outlined through hay bales, rubber foam blocks, markers, advertising boards or banks of earth. The original purpose of the green mesh – hated by riders that skirted the limits for the way it would wrap around an axle, melt a brake, chuck a chain or block the rear end altogether – was to offer a semblance of safety between the action and the spectators with the banding catching stones and dirt and slowing tumbling bikes and riders. With fans already sensibly distanced from the racing these days (a metre distance between the track and further outside fencing is the norm) the green fabric was less called-for.

It had come to represent one of the easily identifiable elements of Grands Prix over the years but now the courses are likely to have a far more open aesthetic, similar to the AMA Nationals, as the choice lies in the hands of respective organisers. Besides the riders, one faction of the championship no doubt pleased with the syntax change to the FIM regs will be the wide collective of photographers and videographers on the scene that now have some different dimensions to their framing.

It is impossible not to comment on the removal of the twenty three year age limit for the MX2 class at the Motocross of Nations. This is a huge shift that strengthens the appeal of the event as the best three riders from each country battle for their flag. The previous rule

meant that some racers were selected based on their time on this earth rather than ability and now there are relatively few barriers for each nation (and there are routinely over thirty who wish to be a part of the annual off-road racing festival) to aim for their three fastest or most appropriate representatives.

It could also see some interesting predicaments. With Italy normally looking towards a quartet of Tony Cairoli, David Philippaerts, Davide Guarneri (who performed superbly at Lommel) and Alex Lupino it is feasible that Cairoli could reminisce on his first two world titles and steer a 250 in MX2 to allow the physically bigger forms of Philippaerts and Guarneri to suit up for the 450s in MX1 and MX Open. How about Ryan Villopoto or Ryan Dungey on a 250 once more? With changes in technical rules that brought the AMA and FIM specifications closer together in the past two years, this latest move is another form of 'relaxation' when it comes to the Nations and permits even more possibilities for unrivalled MX entertainment.



Goodbye green?





# HONDA EURO SERIES' NOW LAUNCHED FOR 2013

**T**he Honda 150 European Championship is now receiving applications for its inaugural season in 2013 and top billing as a support series at six rounds of eighteen in next year's FIM Motocross World Championship. As previously reported in OTOR, Honda Motor Europe have created a special competition based around their CRF150R for 11-14 year olds and the online process for being a part of this bustling new one-make runner can be found [HERE](#). The major angle is that 9,950 euros will buy entry and the bike itself along with tyres, servicing, fuel, lubricants, a coaching programme and race management and the first champion will earn a ride on a Honda supported team for the GP-feeder EMX2 championship for 2014. Honda have clearly moved to place their new scheme as a direct rival to the European 125cc two-stroke championship; a contest that also occurs at world championship Grand Prix events and is seen as part of the 'career ladder' (with EMX2 next and then into MX2 GP racing). The European domain obviously omits fans of Honda's four-stroke 150, which the manufacturing giants pitch as the perfect learner racing tool. Depending on your view Honda are either expanding the base of the pyramid of the sport, creating more access than ever for fast kids to get noticed and get within touching distance of Grand Prix or they

are making it even more elitist with the notion that financial power rather than riding skill will be responsible for filling the gate.

A 2013 upgraded CRF150R can be picked up for a price of around 4000 euros, which makes all the add-ons seem a reasonable package for an entire racing campaign and while there will always be families that have the cash-clout to consider the proposal at the drop of a hat there are also those that have good reason to see this championship as a big 'Red door' and short cut to the international stage.

Honda have covered their rubbery bases though. The European Junior Cup has turned from Orange (Duke 690s in 2012) to Scarlet and will see the new CBR500R present in the hands of road racing aspirants at eight dates of the 2013 World Superbike Championship in Europe. The race package is the same as for motocross but with an extra 10k thrown onto the price of the CBR. For the asphalt entry click [HERE](#)





# YOUTHSTREAM LAY THEIR CARDS FOR THE FUTURE

**A** week of rumour on the internet and discussion in the meeting rooms of rule-makers resulted with a defining press release from Youthstream regarding the future of the FIM Motocross World Championship.

Aside from the ideas with the structure of the sport a few other nuggets of info popped up that are of interest. Notably that Youthstream will again provide a means of travel assistance to teams in the form of freight allowance, that TV production will now take place in HD, a new pit-lane/start gate structure will also house a podium for a completely new look to one of the most visual parts of a Grand Prix weekend and there is a fresh 108% qualification lap-time rule (must be within 108% of the average time) that should help to close up the gulf of ability in the gate and make the motos just that little bit safer.

In wide ranging email Youthstream President Giuseppe Luongo stated: "Not only the economy and the markets have changed, but also people and society. Any product needs to be adopted to cope with the development. Or, in other words, from the famous novel 'The Leopard (Italian: Il Gattopardo)', written by the Italian author Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa: 'If we want things to stay as they are, things will have to change.' Motocross is a great sport; however, when we want it to stay on the top we have to be ready for changes. We must welcome these changes, not being afraid of something new." The Italian goes on: "It is imperative that Motocross becomes more attractive, 'sexier', with more emotions, and an outstanding show. Our programme needs to be understandable for the international viewers and easy to follow for the big TV networks."

Regarding the two moto format for overseas in 2013 and a possible three moto schedule for both classes in 2014, this is what a Grand Prix could look like in a little over a year:

## Saturday

1. First free practice MX2
2. First free practice MX1
3. Second free practice MX2
4. Second free practice MX1
5. Qualifying race MX2
6. Qualifying race MX1

## Sunday

1. Warm-up MX2
2. Warm-up MX1
3. Race 1 MX2 - 12h00
4. Race 1 MX1 - 13h00
5. Super-final MX1 / MX2 - 16h00
6. Podium - 16h50

It short it does represent a major turnover. Luongo explains his reasoning: "This idea has come from listening to the various requirements especially from teams and manufacturers, television and sponsors; this brought us to re-study the entire programme and to use this opportunity to re-launch our sport, because in terms of race format it's very old and has not followed the evolution of the market, media and public who now request something easier to understand, more fun, extreme, cool and spectacular – this is why the X-games, freestyle, and the Monster Cup in Las Vegas are very successful. With this format we will enter a new era for Motocross, while respecting the roots of our sport."



Ray Archer photo



## OPINIONS OF CHANGE...

By Adam Wheeler



**S**o...what do I think? There are two issues at hand. Firstly the validity of Youthstream's intent to 'shake things up' and secondly whether the idea is worthy of merit.

Tackling the first topic you cannot fault the promoters for wanting to see if changes to the sport could carry positive ramifications. We are talking about people with a lot of experience in motocross, event organisation and distribution. Of course any fractures to the status quo will split the fanbase but Youthstream are the body charged with the role of selling the sport, spreading the word and trying to enlarge consciousness of the show with ambitions on a global scale. If they feel change would bring benefit then a degree of encouragement has to be applied. After all, pick any top-level sport and it is very hard to find one that has not adjusted or evolved with the times.

Motocross used to be the ultimate accessible motorsport: the domain of the privateer who could 'lick 'em on a good day'. That sport simply does not exist on an international level now and has not for a number of years. Elite teams, reduced entries, races in countries backed by political cash, riders finding their own sponsors, money talking; these are just some of the symptoms of modern motorsport and – regrettably or not – motocross has simply caught up. Whether you think it is wrong or right, crap or effective, just like in MotoGP and Formula One, the racing goes on and will appeal to tomorrow's fans for perhaps different reasons than our own. This leads onto whether the amalgamation of the two principal classes in an ever-burgeoning World and European scene can work and I think the three moto format has some potential. Mixing the classes would increase the depth of competition and also the safety aspect as only the faster and more capable local riders would make the cut. The peril of the outclassed non-GP participant was glaringly evident in Mexico this

year with some barely managing a lap without hitting the dirt. Other benefits include the likes of Herlings, Tonus and co being able to test their mettle against Cairoli and friends on a regular basis and MX2 youngsters getting more close-up experience by running against the premier class (MX1 and MX2 lap-times are often very close).

Hitches? The start would have to be reconfigured to give the MX2 a hope in hell and would that mean yet more rule changes to come (weight ballast?) to try and balance out the competition? Long-term what will this mean for the future of MX1 and MX2?

Aside from these questions the most immediate problem could be the extra confusion of trying to deduce scores and standings from the MX1-MX2 mash-up.

I've always felt that for motocross to prosper (and we do need some people out there to keep buying bikes and be interested in the sport) it has to be easier to digest for the first-time watcher who is exhilarated by the spectacle but maybe confused why a rider who has not won a moto yet stands on top of the overall podium. Motocross is a two moto sport but Dorna identified this concern back in 2000 when they adopted the unpopular one moto format for the following year. Two motos is not necessarily a problem at the circuit but on the TV it needs better info and graphics from the production crew to indicate who is where on the track and also for the day. There should be a clear distinction between MX1 and MX2 riders through colours and, as my colleague Juan Pablo Acevedo at [www.mx1onboard.com](http://www.mx1onboard.com) pointed out, there has to be an incentive (cash or a few extra points?) to win the Superfinal otherwise why would a second or third placed MX2 rider (but leading his class) push harder for victory? If we are to change the shape of the sport then we need to make sure it is well chiselled and noticeably better.



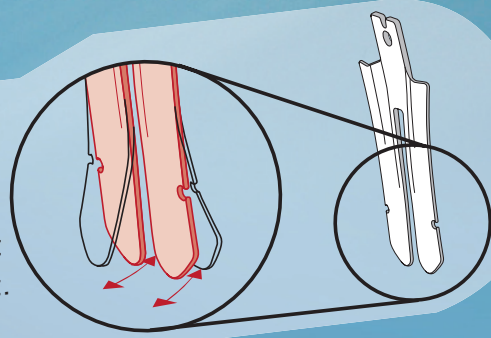
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# THE WINNER MAKER:

## KIRK GIBBONS

**THE TRAINER'S PROLIFIC RECORD WITH MOTOCROSS PROFESSIONALS MEANS THAT HE IS BECOMING ONE OF THE KEY 'GO TO' MEN FOR RACING ASPIRANTS BOTH ON THE MUD AND THE ASPHALT. WHAT'S THE SECRET?**

By Adam Wheeler, photos by [www.edubmedia.co.uk](http://www.edubmedia.co.uk), Ray Archer

**W**hen it comes to 250cc motocross Great Britain have enjoyed a purple patch in 2012 with an MX2 FIM Motocross World Championship runner-up, an EMX2 European Champion and another rider in the top four of the MX2 GP standings. Two of those racers were trained by former boxer and one of the UK's top cross-circuit competitors, Kirk Gibbons. The '40+' year old actually seems to specialise in champions. His initial 'dabble' with motocross – arguably the most physically demanding of all motorcycle sports – came in the form of Jamie Dobb who he drilled to 125cc World Championship success in 2001. Dobb is still Britain's last MX title winner on the GP stage. That status was almost refreshed in

2012 thanks to another of Gibbons' small flock, Tommy Searle, who (entertainingly) pushed Jeffrey Herlings all the way for the MX2 crown and claimed six Grand Prix to be the third most successful rider in the international spotlight. The evidence that Gibbons is very much the man to go to when it comes to chiselling winners is also provided by just one year of work with 2012 European Champion Mel Pocock and the unusual situation of also mentoring Elliott Banks Brown, who defeated Pocock by the narrowest of margins in the very last race of the year for the '12 MX2 British Championship. OTOH grabbed ten minutes with the Derby-based specialist to try and work out how he does it...



### **On his own sporting endeavours....**

I was boxing since I was 12 and an amateur fighter for 20 years. I got up to being number two in Great Britain and knocked out a future world champion but couldn't turn pro because of eye problem at the time. I then worked up to being number one for cross-training and fitness in the UK. All I do is train, train, train!

### **On the work with Jamie Dobb and learning about the demands of motocross...**

I feel a bit sorry for James because he was my 'experiment' and we did so much training at the time in 2000 that - on reflection - he probably did not need to do. Motocross was brand new to me at then and these guys now (Searle, Pocock etc) are benefitting from that. With Jamie we should have won the title in 2000 and we did more than we needed but in 2001 we got it spot-on. I have specific circuits that I use for motocrossers and they do tend to work. Anybody can get fit, so I think the most important part is getting in the head of the athlete and preparing for a race weekend. The body can be in peak condition but if the head isn't right then you can forget about the physical side.

I remember training Jamie. In 2000 we finished second and 2001 we won the title. We went to America that winter to get ready for 2002 and a couple of guys came up to me and said 'how did you get that guy to win a world title?' because they remembered him as being lazy. I said it was because he wanted it, and worked his ass-off. That year nobody would have touched Jamie. He won that championship even with a broken collarbone.

I learned so much through that period of time and not just physically. I hear of riders getting out on the track and riding for three hours a day and I think 'you keep doing that'. My guys are in the gym doing a thirty minute circuit, pushing themselves, and then they are ready for the weekend.

### **On making those first steps with a Pro...**

Pre-season is the most important time and every year my athletes will get stronger and stronger through those pre-season periods. You could say there is some pressure to gel with a particular guy but I don't look at it that way because I have faith in what I do. I know that if the guys I'm with do the work and give their best then they'll be successful. I have known Tommy since he was fifteen and have been training him that long. He has questioned some of the things that we do and that's natural. He'll say 'Kirk, should I be doing this because I don't want to be tired for riding the next day?' and I'll say 'trust me, have faith'. It takes a period of time to get to the best stage with an athlete and there have been moments where I've had to assess what I've done with Tommy and how it has made him feel afterwards and affected his ability to perform but we've honed it to something that is almost perfect for him now. Tommy is so mentally strong and he's very regimented in what he does when it comes to training, eating and sleeping and loves it like that. He is going to be dangerous next year on a 450; he will be on a different level.













### **On the mental part of the job...**

I can see that some days Tommy comes in a bit tired or he's mentally not where he needs to be, so I'll give him a session that will bring him back and make him feel better, even though it is perhaps not really what we should have been working on! You have to judge it. Some days he'll come in and we'll just talk, and that was the case for a little while during the summer where he was trying to decide what to do and where to go for MX1 and it was affecting his riding briefly.

### **On being flexible...**

I remember last year Tommy went through a period of three grands prix where he didn't win a race and he came to me on a bit of a downer. It was like the season was already over. We spent a couple of sessions just talking because this talented kid had to reset his mind that he had the skill and the tools to do the job.

### **On the element of competition...**

These guys are in the gym most days with road racers, boxers and other athletes and there is competition there, like on the track at the weekend. We try to get to a point where that aspect of the job at the weekend – the racing – is the fun.

### **On the transformation of Mel Pocock from a Grand Prix points scorer in 2010 to European Champion...**

I remember going to a Grand Prix with Tommy and meeting Mel a couple of years ago. He was a nice kid and I remember thinking he had a nice style on the bike. I told him to come and see me when he was ready and it was only last year that we linked up. We had our little 'issues' because he wasn't stepping outside of his comfort zone, which is what I like people to do. I train a lot of young kids from boxers, footballers to racers and I tell them that they are here because they have a talent. I say "give me – and themselves 110% - or get a 9-5 job" I know which option I'd rather do. Mel was in the gym and going through some sessions and he wasn't hurting himself as he should and wasn't competing against the others like he should and I told him. I know that when I train I put it 'out there' and I expect my guys to do the same. My riders will not lose a race through not being fit or mentally strong. The condition and the readiness will be there.



***“I believe I can look at a chosen sport and identify what an individual would need to improve. I don’t give anybody something to do that I cannot take on myself. ....”***



#### **On working one-to-one...**

I can see and recognise when an athlete needs some one-to-one attention. We'll have a chat on the phone or go out and get something to eat. But honestly, the group in the gym love the banter! I don't have many athletes because I don't like to train a lot. This year didn't really turn out as I wished as I did someone a favour and ended up looking after a couple of riders who went against each other in the British Championship. That won't happen again because it gets messy with the whole mental side if you have two riders that are going at it. You can't give both 100% and it is tricky. I don't like to separate myself like that. For that reason I didn't go to a lot of the British rounds in '12!

#### **On the fitness difference between off-road and road racers...**

I train both (Lowes twins and Leon Haslam) and motocross kids have obviously got to be a bit more physically fit but my guys do the same type of training because it's competitive. The main differences come in the week of a race and then they will wind-down in other ways. The motocross guys will do a specific circuit that I've used for over ten years and obviously it works because the riders are getting the results. We taper that down the week of a meeting so that maybe they'll do a third of a circuit instead of a full one. The circuit varies through the winter but you cannot just jump into it and improve. There is that whole pre-season period with the aerobic and strength fitness and then we put both together.







# WHERE NEXT FOR CP377?

Coming back from Bercy, it stuck me what a shame it is that World Champion, two-time 250SX champion and almost two-time AMA 250MX champion (one year his bike blew up and one year he crashed mere laps away from winning it) Christophe Pourcel appears to have lost his way. It's more than doubtful that the Frenchman won't ever reach the heights that most thought he would and due to things in his control and out of his control, his career appears to be rudderless.

At Bercy, the CP377 showed up with a late replacement KTM after his original orange bikes had been stolen before the Genoa SX. The old habits we saw in America were there though as in practice he would only put a lap or two in of hard riding to get him inside the top five before basically cruising around. Unfortunately for Pourcel, he couldn't turn it on in the races - although he did win a Heat on Saturday night - he was sick, his bike set-up was off and his weekend ended early when he went down hard in Saturday night's main event that required a hospital stay.

And now, without a GP team to ride for and a desire to not race GP's anyways, Pourcel indicated right here in OTOR a few weeks ago that he'll go back to his house in Florida and decide what to do from there.

There are no American teams that he wants to ride for that would hire him for the money that he wants and there's no American teams that are of the "B" and "C" level that Christophe would want to run-out for. In short, he appears to be at a crossroads in his career.

The next move for Pourcel is something that he's got to decide for himself after some soul searching. Does he want to race? Does he have to race to make money? It seems to be that from this seat the work ethic needed to succeed at the highest levels of motocross doesn't appear to be there nor the desire frankly.

Maybe he takes some time off to get that fire back and maybe it comes back or maybe not. It's up to the enigmatic Pourcel to figure out.

One thing for sure is no matter what he decides, he's never going to leave his mark the way his talent dictated that he should have. He'll forever be a 'what if' question mark for bench racers everywhere and the sad thing is, he's shown over and over that he doesn't really care all that much what anyone else thinks.



Simon Cudby photo





# WILSON GOES PC AGAIN

**W**ell the other shoe dropped in the Dean Wilson sweepstakes with the announcement that Wilson is going back to his old team for next year. It seems like only yesterday that we were all wondering where Dean was going to go after he was done at Pro Circuit. We know the story, Jeff Ward Racing won the rights for Dean's services with a multi-year contract (for a rumored 800K a year) to race 450 full-time but shortly after getting on the bike, the team itself fell apart due to lack of funding and whether or not the JWR team goes racing or not in 2013 is in question right now. But one thing for sure, it won't have Jeff Ward or Dean Wilson on it.

So Wilson was left without a saddle late into the off-season and I'm sure behind the scenes there were a lot of phone calls (a lot of budget reshuffling as well) to see if anyone out there can make room for Wilson - a former outdoor champion and one of the up and coming star riders. And in the end, Wilson and his agent Tony Gardea put him back on the Pro Circuit team for 250SX and 450MX which in my opinion is the best thing for the rider and his career. Wilson was adamant he wanted off the 250 as he felt like he was too tall for the bike but in my eyes, he won an outdoor title with ridiculous speed and consistency so I'm not buying the handicap.

He's never won a 250SX title so there's always that box to check and the equipment/team wasn't going to get any better than Pro Circuit. It was a slam-dunk and in my opinion, he shouldn't have left in the first place.

So Wilson immediately becomes the odds on favorite to win the 250 East SX title and then he gets to go to the 450 for the outdoors (interesting that Tyla Rattray, another rider that was looking for a full-time 450 ride resigned with Pro Circuit for the same program as Wilson 250SX and 450MX so PC is going to have a couple of top five guys in the 450 class as well as its usual powerhouse 250 team) so after a total disaster of a deal with JWR, Dean has landed the absolute best thing he could have.

In talking to my Kawasaki people, they desperately didn't want Dean to leave green, he's been on the bikes his whole life and they wanted to make room for Dean somewhere so I have no doubt that Kawasaki kicked in a bit of extra help towards Pro Circuit to make sure that Dean is taken care of. Wilson's back where he was and in my opinion, this was a great thing for everyone involved.



**READY TO RACE**  
» www.ktm.com

Photos: Tagliari S., Archer R.

**CAIROLI UND  
HERLINGS  
WELTMEISTER!**

# DÉJÀ-VU

Tony Cairoli krönt sich 2012 vorzeitig und zum dritten Mal in Folge mit der KTM 350 SX-F zum MX1 Weltmeister. Nach Marvin Musquin 2010 und Ken Roczen 2011, sorgt Jeffrey Herlings mit der KTM 250 SX-F dafür, dass das Red Bull KTM Werksteam seit nunmehr drei Jahren in beiden Klassen ungeschlagen ist – WELTKLASSE!

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# DAMA-MX BLOG

## TREY TALKING...

By Steve Matthes

There's plenty of talk about the big four coming into the 2013 supercross season: Ryan Villopoto (two-time and '12 SX champ), Ryan Dungey (2010 SX champ), James Stewart (two-time SX champ) and Chad Reed (two-time SX champ). These are the four riders that look to have an inside edge and they're called the 'big four' for good reason.

But if you remember, after the 2011 supercross series was over, it wasn't the big four, it was the big five as Honda's Trey Canard firmly established himself as a rider that can straight-up win races against the quartet. A look back at that 2011 series proves that he can be again.

Before the one-week break in the series, the #41 rider had won two out of the last four races and scored a third in one of the others. Despite a horrible Daytona, Canard was only twenty points away from the lead and with his three garlands, he had more victories than Reed and Dungey and tied with Stewart behind Villopoto; Canard was on a roll going into the last three events but first, some outdoor testing was scheduled.

And that's where things got sideways. Out at Competitive Edge, Trey held it pinned a little too much over a rise, landed on his front wheel and re-broke his femur from the year before. That was it for Canard's SX season and most of his outdoor year as well. He came back at round eight of the motocross term, scored a third in his first moto back and then promptly re-broke his leg in the same spot. A faulty pin at the top of the rod put into the femur was the culprit. Another surgery awaited Canard and he came into 2012 hoping to put the injury bug behind him.

We all know what happened this past year. Canard, staying safe by doubling the triple at the third round in Los Angeles when he picked up a tuff block cover, was landed on by Ryan Morais in a horrific accident. In some respects, Trey was lucky that he only broke his back, it could have

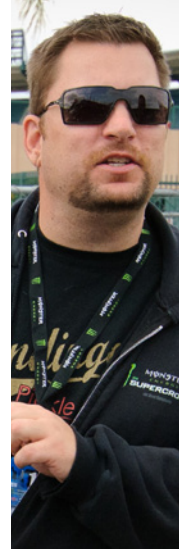
been a whole lot worse. But yet again, Canard was out for the year.

The roll that Canard was on in capturing the 250MX title, representing (and winning with) Team USA at Lakewood and coming into 2011 as one of the hottest young stars in the sport seemed to be a very long time ago. Since then, it's been injuries, a couple of bright spots and yet more injuries for Trey. Since that crash while outdoor testing, Canard's lined up for a total of four races. That puts him as a question mark and almost an unknown quantity for 2013.

Trey's once again healthy, his spine protected by a titanium cage, and getting ready to make a comeback yet again. According to the Honda people I've spoken with, they don't notice any drop-off from the 'pre-injury Canard'. He's got his trademark scrub back, he's aggressive and doesn't appear to be affected by any of the 'fragile' talk. A few ticks of a second from team-mate Justin Barcia in some recent testing that took place at Barcia's own track shows he's where he needs to be.

His coach Tim Ferry seems to concur: "You never really know until it's race time how someone is going to do but he's taken this recovery so serious and with so much determination I expect him to be right back to where he was at some point." Trey's a bit of a self-made star, he was never a "can't miss" prospect and although he came into the pros winning the 250 East SX title, it was a bit of a dry spell from there. Losing his father at a young age, earning a GEICO Honda ride and winning in the 450SX class all indicate how many things he's had to overcome so far. So yeah, he may not be right there with the 'big four' to start the year off but is anyone willing to doubt that he can't get back there?

I know I'm definitely not.











## ALPINESTARS

When it comes to boots then no need to look much further. Alpinestars have footwear for pretty much every type of motorcycle, rider and condition and over a period of decades the company has come to specialise in the best material, engineering and product for dollars.

The **Tech 3S Youth** is the ideal solution for juniors who are looking to take the next step with a bit more time in the saddle and the construction of the boot builds in elements of the popular Tech8 and Tech10. Reviews on the internet comment on the comfort and durability.

Also shown here is the **Slipstream** pack. It looks a little weird but the near seamless creation (the main body is stitch-less) houses a laptop section, two external pockets and an internal organiser as well as a 21.5 litre capacity and screams 'waterproof'. As well as the shoulder straps there is also a hip fastener and the yellow shade means increased visibility when on the road. The boots should be found for around 150 euros while the backpack is high-tech stuff and should number around the same figure.









## BLAUER

We stumbled across Blauer at EICMA and was impressed by the set-up of the stand and the quality and presentation of the products that include helmets, two new coats and an attention grabbing new sweatshirt, called Easy, that will come in six colours and be available to buy next spring. This neoprene windproof garment has protected and reinforced elbow and shoulder sections.

Blauer is distinguished through its connection with U.S. police and Special Forces since 1935. A couple of the helmets are on show here and the rest of the line can be found at [www.blauerhelmets.com](http://www.blauerhelmets.com), which strangely only works on touch tablets and mobile devices.





# TRIUMPH

More than just iconic motorcycles Triumph have bolstered the strength of the brand with some bold moves in the fashion and apparel market in the past three years.

Retro and the classic smart-casual look is definitely 'in' and the image dovetails perfectly with the re-launched two wheel models such as the Bonneville, Thruxton and Scrambler.

Steve McQueen pops up again as a key theme as the Triumph PR states: 'Triumph riding legends including Steve McQueen provide the inspiration for our heritage ranges with T-shirts and jackets inspired by historic stories of the past.'

From what we've seen the garments are reasonably priced, well made and cater for a variety of needs. For more info check out [www.triumphmotorcycles.co.uk](http://www.triumphmotorcycles.co.uk)















# BELL

The M5X, M6, M3, M1 and then Off-road Moto8 and MotoR, Bell – a company with almost sixty years of history – certainly are not short of models and choice.

From complete carbon fibre models to limited editions and a website where you can customise your own graphics, the American firm is a small paradise of head protection. Here we show the two off-road units. The Moto 8 (as used by James Stewart) and the Moto R.

[www.bell-motohelmets.com](http://www.bell-motohelmets.com)







## BACKPAGE

2012 Monster Energy girls  
By Milagro











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